

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application as amended is respectfully requested. In this Amendment, claims 1-20, 22-24 have been amended. It is respectfully submitted that the amendments do not add new matter. Claim 21 has been cancelled without prejudice.

Applicants reserve all rights with respect to the applicability of the Doctrine of equivalents.

IDS

Applicants submitted an IDS under 37 CFR §1.97(b) on June 20, 2002. Applicants respectfully request consideration of the references cited therein.

Specification

The applicants have amended the Abstract to limit it to a range of 50 to 150 words.

Claim Objections

Claims 3 and 10 are objected to because of the following informalities: regarding claim 3 line 20, "on" should be "one", regarding claim 10 line 9, "suppler" should be "supplier". The applicants have amended claims 3 and 10 to make the appropriate corrections.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejected claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite. Because the applicants have cancelled claim 21 without prejudice, applicants respectfully submit that the rejection is now moot.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 101

Claims 1-20, 22-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Applicants respectfully submits that claims 1 and 22, as amended, satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C § 101 and respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection of the claims 1 and 22 and associated dependent claims 2-20, 23-24 under 35 U.S.C. §101.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-5, 10, 14, 15, and 17-24 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shkedy (USPN 6,260,024) in view of Chinnappan (US Pre-Grant Publication No. 2002/0011187).

Chinnappan has a filing date of Dec. 22, 2000, which precedes applicants' filing date of Feb. 15, 2001, by less than two months. Applicants reserve the right to swear behind the reference at a later date.

In independent claims 1 and 22, applicants claim generating a generic specification for a set of functionally equivalent components and assigning a unique number to each group of functionally equivalent components.

As acknowledged by the Examiner, Shkedy does not teach or suggest this limitation. The Examiner states:

Shkedy fails to teach generating a generic specification for requested goods, wherein for each group of functionally equivalent components there is one unique number and a plurality of supplier generated functional numbers. Chinnappan discloses a system and method for identifying a product, which may be specified or determined to facilitate a commercial transaction involv[ing] the product (paragraph 6 lines 13-14). The system uses a hierarchical numbering directory which assigns numbers based on the product class, and specific product properties, the result of which is a globally unique identifier, which a buyer may use to identify a product and to request information or additional transactions from the source of the product (paragraph 10). Chinnappan teaches that this system and

method may be used for the cataloging of products by sellers and the matching of a buyer's demands to one or more products of one or more sellers (paragraph 23 lines 8-10). Chinnappan also teaches that two products in the database may have identical features, but may have different product identification numbers assigned by the manufacturer (paragraph 46 lines 8-13).

(Office Action dated 09/23/05, page 5, ¶11 to page 6 ¶ 12).

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1 and 22 recite generating a generic specification for a set of functionally equivalent components and assigning a unique number to each group of functionally equivalent components. Thus, because Chinnappan discloses assigning different product identification numbers (PIDs) to products having identical features, it teaches the opposite of what is claimed.

Chinnappan discloses identifying a product with a hierarchy of identifiers: an FID (feature identifier) to identify a group features of the product, a PID (product identification number) to identify the product from other products in a class to which the product belongs, a CID (class identifier) to identify the class from other classes in a group, and a GUID (globally unique identifier) to identify the group of classes. (Chinnappan, Abstract, ¶46). The class defines attributes of the products categorized in the class. (Chinnappan, Abstract).

Applicants respectfully submit that none of the identifiers that comprise the GUID disclosed in Chinnappan can be properly interpreted as being equivalent to the unique number assigned to each group of functionally equivalent components. The FID, and PID are unique to a product and do not identify a group of functionally equivalent products. The CID includes several PIDs, but since, each product may belong to more than one class, the CID does not uniquely identify a group of functionally equivalent components. (See, e.g., p. 1, ¶6 of Chinnappan, which discloses that a CID identifies at least one product class in which the product is categorized.)

Thus, Chinnappan does not teach or suggest assigning a unique number to each group of functionally equivalent components, as claimed.

As neither Shkedy nor Chinnappan teaches or suggests each and every limitation of independent claims 1 and 22, the combination does not render obvious claims 1 and 22 and associated dependent claims.

Claims 6-9, 11-13 and 16


Claims 6-9, 11-13 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shkedy and Chinnappan in view of alleged knowledge in the art. With respect to claims 6-9, and 11-13, the Examiner has taken official notice that spreadsheet capabilities such as creating, adding, and deleting rows and columns, calculating values based on row and column values, and the use of drop down menus is old and well known in the art. With respect to claim 16, the Examiner has taken official notice that basing the new price on previously received bids in an auction is well known in the art. Thus, the alleged knowledge in the art does not teach or suggest assigning a unique number to each group of functionally equivalent components, as claimed.

As none of Shkedy, Chinnappan, or the alleged knowledge in the art teaches or suggests each and every limitation of independent claims 1 and 22, the combination does not render obvious claims 1 and 22 and associated dependent claims 6-9, 11-13 and 16.

If there are any additional charges, please charge them to our Deposit Account
No. 02-2666.

Respectfully submitted,
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